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In Reply to Office Action mailed May 25, 2006
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REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on May 25, 2006. Claims 1-31 were pending in the application and were rejected. With this response, claims 1, 7-11, 16, 18, and 20 amended. Claims 6, 14, 17, and 24-31 are canceled. The remaining claims are unchanged, and no new claims are added to the application.

The specification was objected to because the U.S. Patent Serial number was missing from page 1, line 4. Applicants have amended the specification to include serial number "10/054,343.

Claims 1, 16, 20-21, and 26 were objected because of an informality describing the term "MIP." The pending independent claims have been amended to include the description of "wherein MIP is mixed integer problem." Claim 26 was canceled.

The claims 6-10, 14-15, 17-19, and 24-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, because it is unclear what is meant by certain parameters appearing in the claims. Applicants respectfully submit that each of these parameters are clearly described in the specification, such as in tables I - VIII. In addition, applicants have amended the now applicable claims to include a definition of these parameters.

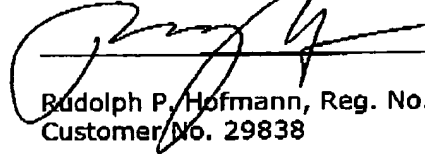
Claims 1-5, 11-13, 16, 20-23, 26-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. as being unpatentable over Yu in view of Dialog. On the other hand, claims 6-10, 14-15, 17-19, and 24-25 are indicated as "allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." With this amendment, the limitations of claims 6, 14, and 24 have been amended into independent claims 1, 11, and 20, respectively. Applicants have amended the additional dependent claims to reflect this change. Applicants respectfully submit that the amended independent claims are patentably distinguishable from the prior art.

Applicants respectfully request the removal of the rejection and also request favorable action and allowance of the application.

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In the event a telephone conversation would expedite the allowance of the present application, the undersigned may be reached at 612-607-7340. If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this paper, then the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees, including fees for any extension of time, to Deposit Account No. 50-1901 (Docket 20032-3009).

Respectfully submitted,



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